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child welfare

February 1961

Manpower Shortages and Services for
Children

The Function and Role of the Natural
Parent in the Foster Family Con-
stellation

The Use of Regular Community
Facilities for Children with Special
Needs

Connecticut Extends Agency Adop-
tion Services

Children in Need of Parents: The
Legal Problems

CHILD WELFARE

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CHILD WELFARE is a forum for discussion in print of child welfare problems and the programs and skills needed to solve them. Endorsement does not necessarily go with the printing of opinions expressed over a signature.

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MANPOWER SHORTAGES AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Ernest Witte

Executive Director
Council on Social Work Education
New York City

The lack of qualified social workers is still an urgent problem in child welfare programs.

THE shortage of qualified personnel in the helping professions is widely recognized. But we need more knowledge of the underlying causes, and the implications for services for children and youth, of what is being done to meet the situation, and what further needs to be done to bring the demand for professionally prepared social workers into better balance with the supply.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1950 listed approximately 75,000 social work positions in the United States.¹ Approximately 20 percent of the people filling these positions had received their graduate professional degree in social work. The fact that the established positions then reported were very unevenly distributed both among the states and within the states also has great significance in relation to available services.

A Bureau of Labor Statistics study of the current situation will be available later this year. Estimates made by the Council on Social Work Education indicate that there are currently some 100,000 positions in the United States which may be classified as social work. It seems unlikely that there has been any marked advance over 1950 in the percentage of professionally prepared workers. It does seem certain that there is a greater concentration of social workers with training in metropolitan areas than there was in 1950.

Increasing Need for Social Workers

As urbanization has increased, with its attendant complications and social problems, as population has risen spectacularly and has changed in composition, and as society has shown increasing concern for the needs of its members, new demands for social workers have been created. In 1952, the Council on So-

cial Work Education reported that the field would need to recruit 50,000 new workers by 1960 to fill existing vacancies, to replace those leaving the field, and to staff new positions. A CSWE study in 1954 indicated that there then existed 3,000 public assistance and public child welfare vacancies for which funds had actually been appropriated.² In a study of manpower needs in the health services it was reported there were in 1954 some 2,300 unfilled positions in medical and psychiatric social work, and that an additional 1,800 to 2,000 medical and psychiatric social workers were needed annually.³ Population experts reported in 1956 that welfare services would need to be increased by 50 percent by 1975, just to maintain the same ratio of services to population as existed then.

The magnitude of the problem of developing an adequate supply of professionally trained social workers can be illustrated by the need for staff in public assistance alone. To provide two years of professional education for one-third of the social work staff estimated as necessary to administer public assistance by 1970, it would be necessary to triple the present enrollment of full-time students in schools of social work. (Enrollment was approximately 5,000 as of November 1, 1959.)

The Council on Social Work Education now estimates that between 10,000 and 15,000 new recruits are needed annually to staff current welfare programs and to provide for normal expansion. This estimate does not provide for the substantial personnel expansion which population increases alone would seem to require.

The Supply of Social Work Personnel

As I have indicated, most of those holding positions in social work have had no profes-

¹ See *Social Workers in 1950*, A Report on: The Study of Salaries and Working Conditions in Social Work, made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, published by the American Association of Social Workers, N.Y., 1952.

² *Social Work Education*, June 1955.

³ *Mobilization and Health Manpower*, Washington, D. C.: Office of Defense Mobilization, January 1956, pp. 28-29.

sional preparation for their work. There are sharp variations within the field, however. Voluntary family agencies have the highest percentage of professionally trained staff, with voluntary and public child welfare services next. In the main, except for the highly specialized medical and psychiatric services, professionally trained social workers are used in supervisory and administrative positions.

Marked progress has been made in recent years in the educational requirements for social work positions in the public welfare services. Almost all of them now require as a minimum the B.A. degree or its equivalent. This is important, since it makes such staff academically eligible for admission to a school of social work for professional education.

Until rather recently there was general satisfaction with the progress being made in increasing the supply of professionally educated social workers. It was not until 1951 that there began a period of continuing decline in the enrollment of full-time students in schools of social work. In the preceding period there had generally been many more applicants for admission than the schools could accept.

Analysis of the puzzling and disturbing reasons for the sharp decline in enrollment, the growing gap between the demand for persons to fill welfare positions and the available supply, and the attendant problems revealed these major causes for the situation:

The low birth rate during the depression years, which began to affect college enrollment in this period.

An increased sustained demand for personnel, resulting in part from the continued high level of economic activity.

The continued heavy demand for manpower by the military services.

The early age at which women marry. (This is a particularly significant fact since approximately 65 percent of all social work positions are filled by women. It was reflected also in the greater financial responsibilities of men students, of whom an increasing number were married.)

Termination of the Veterans Educational Program. (Between June 22, 1944 and November 30, 1952, some 4,200 World War II veterans used their educational benefits to enroll in schools of social work, and an additional 2,000 disabled veterans studied social work under Public Law 16 between March 1943 and November 1952.)

The inadequacy in both numbers and amount of scholarships and other forms of financial aid available to social work students.

The lag in salaries and related benefits in the field of social welfare in comparison with those in other and often closely related fields.

The lack of prestige accorded social workers. (This factor is, of course, related to salaries. Both of these factors have an increasing influence upon career choice as the value placed upon them in our society continues to grow.)

Consequences of the Shortage

It is unfortunate that we have not made clearer to the public the consequences of the shortage of social work personnel. For only as the consequences come to be understood will there be less negative criticism of our shortcomings and more positive action to improve and expand services.

In a limited national survey made in 1957 an effort was made to get at some of the more significant effects of this personnel shortage upon services to people.⁴ The results were startling. They made very clear that the personnel shortage should be viewed not only in statistical but in human terms. People needing welfare services and the programs established to serve them are being hurt, sometimes drastically, by the personnel shortage. Among the more dramatic effects reported were these:

One national mental health organization reported that there is general agreement that shortage of psychiatric personnel, including psychiatric social workers, is a major obstacle to returning more mental patients to their home communities where they could get better care and live happier and more productive lives. A state mental health commissioner reported that the lack of social workers kept patients unnecessarily in overcrowded mental hospitals.

The executive of a council of community agencies testified to the "human" cost of the shortage to children and families. He said:

"The public agency in our community has had to refuse service in child welfare cases because of lack of staff. There are instances of the juvenile court not pressing neglect charges because of inability to service the case . . . We

⁴ See Alex Rosen, "So What?", *Social Work Education* December 1957.

feel that lack of *qualified* personnel is one of the factors which underlie the negative, critical public reaction we had in the last legislature to illegitimacy in Aid to Dependent Children cases. Home conditions for these children are not conducive to their wholesome development. Qualified personnel is not available for the evaluation needed for aggressive action in such cases."

Many agencies, both casework and group work, reported that the quality of program becomes "thin" when a disproportionate number of untrained, part-time and overloaded staff begins to prevail in the agency. Some agencies have found it necessary to disband day care programs, curtail the volunteer training programs, or discontinue efforts to organize groups in certain areas. Generally, it seems then that the lack of qualified staff has meant a deterioration in program, unusual turnover among group leaders and membership loss.

This illustrates a basic point. The personnel shortage is not to be measured only by the number of unfilled jobs. Many agencies and communities often do not even try to expand a program because of the lack of qualified personnel, so that the vacancy "dies aborning" in the planning stages. A director of a council of social agencies described such a situation:

"The general unavailability of social workers results in restrictions on community planning for new services, since it is known in advance that there is little chance of securing qualified personnel. Agency boards and people working on the community level are as aware as is the profession of the critical shortage. In budget meetings for the United Givers Fund agencies, committee members know that year after year agencies turn back funds that they were unable to use because of unfilled positions. Thus our local family agency does not have a homemaker service, our juvenile court does not have trained social workers. If there were a greater possibility of securing such a qualified staff, there would be greater incentive to work toward such goals."

In the past the usual reason for an agency's inability to undertake a particular program was the absence of funds. Recently one youth-serving agency, after much effort and planning, secured a foundation grant for a program with "hard-to-reach" youth. The program has not yet been started—not because of inadequate funds, but because qualified staff could not be found.

Perhaps the most serious of all the consequences of the personnel shortage is the inadequate service provided the more than 2,235,000 children in the more than 771,000 one-parent families who are supported by the Aid to Dependent Children program (as of August 1959: Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Bureau of Public Assistance, Advance Release Table 1). The program is designed to give these children—who are handicapped by having, generally, but one parent in the home, and are living on a meager (and generally uncertain) income—a chance to become normal self-supporting citizens. The program has been widely condemned, those dependent upon it scorned and degraded, and the standards of assistance provided chronically inadequate. Public condemnation has come about in great part because many of the mothers in these families have themselves come from deprived homes and do not always conform to approved behavior patterns. More often than not, they need the most professional help of well-qualified social workers if the vicious cycle is ever to be broken and their children are to have a chance at happiness and normal productive lives.

Ironically, in this area needing the greatest skill the fewest number of professionally trained social workers are to be found. (This is true in public assistance generally, and the reasons go beyond those relating to the general shortage of social workers.) The unmet need for social service in these and related families—including child beneficiaries of insurance from the old age, survivors and disability insurance program—poses a serious problem as well as a tremendous challenge to our society.

Increasing the Supply of Workers

In 1953, a national recruitment program was initiated under leadership of the Council on Social Work Education. Among the program activities developed were:

The publication and distribution of pamphlets, leaflets, and brochures explaining social work, social work education, opportunities for careers, and ways of entering the field. These have been written for high school and college students, parents, teachers, and guidance personnel.⁵

⁵ For a list of career publications available, write The Council on Social Work Education, 345 East 46th Street, New York 17, N.Y.

The collection, publication, and distribution of information on the financial aids available to students wishing to enroll in accredited graduate schools of social work.⁶

The production and distribution of audio-visual aids including exhibits, film strips, and films.⁷

Publication of, and encouragement of others to publish, articles explaining social work in newspapers, magazines, and professional journals, to reach the widest possible audience.

Sponsorship and encouragement of radio and television programs which interpret the functions of social work.

Organization of community-wide recruitment committees in major metropolitan areas, representative of both citizen and professional interests, to give leadership to local recruitment activities.

Development of additional financial assistance to help students finance their professional education for social work.

Sponsorship of career days, come-see tours, summer work experience and related activities to give prospective students a better understanding of the field.⁸

A sustained campaign to increase the salaries and benefits paid social workers.

A continuing effort to improve social work practice, and prestige, through the improvement of social work education.

These and other recruitment activities are still in progress, and will be expanded and further developed as resources permit.

Although the Council on Social Work Education has taken leadership in these recruitment activities, the efforts have been carried on by national, state, and local voluntary and public welfare agencies throughout the country, all of which have a common need and concern to increase the supply of qualified social work staff.

Effectiveness of Recruitment Efforts

Although there is no certain measure of the effectiveness of the recruitment program which has been described, we do have the following data on enrollment of full-time students in schools of social work:

Full-Time Enrollment and Number of Graduates
in Accredited Schools of Social Work in U.S. for Year Specified⁹

Academic Year	No. of Full-Time Students	No. of Graduates
1947-48	3737	1759
1948-49	3716	1803
1949-50	4006	1804
1950-51 *	4336	1923
1951-52	4195	1946
1952-53	4006	1844
1953-54 **	3694	1651
1954-55 ***	3512	1655
1955-56	3644	1634
1956-57	3811	1612
1957-58	4165	1744
1958-59	4551	1897
1959-60	4934	2087
Nov. 1960	5179

* Peak enrollment before national recruitment campaign initiated.

** National recruitment program initiated.

*** Lowest point of enrollment.

⁶ *Social Work Fellowships and Scholarships in the United States and Canada for the Academic Year 1959-60 and 1960-61* (biennial publication of Council on Social Work Education).

⁷ A list of audio-visual aids useful for recruiting purposes may be obtained from the Council on Social Work Education.

⁸ See "Trial Runs—Summer Work Programs," *Social Work Education*, 4th Special Recruitment Issue, April 1958, pp.

37-41; and "Effective Recruitment Programs Highlighted," *Social Work Education*, 5th Special Recruitment Issue, February 1959, pp. 5-7, 15-21.

⁹ *Statistics on Social Work Education*, November 1, 1958 and Academic Year 1958-59, and earlier issues, Council on Social Work Education.

Perhaps it should be made clear at this point that the shortage of personnel is not unique to social work: there is not something peculiarly wrong with social work. Almost all professional schools, including law, pharmacy, nursing, library, dental, medical and many more had their peak of applications for admission around 1949 and 1950 and, like social work, have since had severe declines in the number of applications per student enrolled.

The social work field has done better, numerically, than is generally believed. While the number of college graduates dropped from 432,000 in 1950 to 290,000 in 1954—a 30 percent decline—the number of students enrolled in schools of social work during the same period dropped only about 20 percent. This was true even though the pool of available candidates for schools of social work is limited to those who have received bachelor's degrees from the undergraduate colleges and universities.¹⁰

As of this time there is no adequate measure of whether the proportion of social work personnel with professional education has increased since the last official count in 1950, decreased, or remained stationary, nor do we know whether there has been any improvement in the proportion of social work positions filled. This information will be available only after the Bureau of Labor Statistics study is completed in late 1960.

The Task Ahead

It is obvious that in the foreseeable future there is little possibility of staffing all social work positions with professionally educated social workers. The field must, therefore, while working toward this desirable objective, make the most effective use of the available professionally trained personnel, and help less well-prepared personnel to function as effectively as possible. Some of the ways in which this can be done are:

Relieving professional personnel of time consuming tasks which can be as well or better performed by others, thus reducing the number of professionals required. One business firm found that this rearrangement of function made it possible for one engineer to perform the professional functions of

what had previously required two engineers. Social work still has to come to grips with this possibility.

Utilizing professional staff in ways which enable them to make their maximum professional contribution. For example, cases may be classified and assigned according to the skill needed to provide the client with the help he requires to achieve his maximum potential of self help.

Reducing the amount of supervision provided experienced and mature staff members.

Utilizing on a part-time basis professional personnel who are not available for full-time employment.

Bringing back into the field professionally educated personnel who retired because of marriage but whose family responsibilities now permit their employment provided they are given refresher training.

Making more effective use of aides to assist professional personnel in those aspects of their work requiring less knowledge and skill.

Finding ways to reduce turnover, which causes an appalling waste within the field of social work.

Stepping up staff development programs.

Improving undergraduate education for social work.

These and other steps can improve services quickly while we continue to take more time-consuming steps to increase the number of schools of social work, to increase enrollment in all schools, to increase the amount of aid available to students wishing to become professional social workers, and to improve the social work curriculum.

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¹⁰ Ernest F. Witte, "Personnel Shortage—Fact or Fiction?" *Community*, November 1958, pp. 30-31.

THE FUNCTION AND ROLE OF THE NATURAL PARENT IN THE FOSTER FAMILY CONSTELLATION

Bertha E. Swindall

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Supervisor, Division of Child Welfare Services
Illinois Department of Public Welfare

IT is our presumption that the everyday activities of the child welfare placement caseworker are determined by the concepts and principles of social casework, governed by a body of theoretical knowledge concerning human relationships which is accumulated in its study and practice. It is in this frame of reference that I wish to present this exploration of some of the aspects of the continuum of theory into practice based on a combination of observation from my own practice as a supervisor, teacher, and caseworker, and a digest of many conferences and conversations, primarily informal, but always structured, with many placement workers from both private and public child care agencies.

The social agency provides the structure which makes the caseworker's services available to clients, but it is the caseworker who activates the agency. Therefore, the caseworker's personal conceptualizations of social casework theory and agency policy are very important; equally important is the caseworker's capacity to review the effectiveness of his work as measured by the philosophical and theoretical tenets of his profession. Proper and rewarding professional development demands a painstaking review of what *is* done as measured by what we thought *should have been* done; a thorough examination of the original goals in the case in comparison to the actual results. Are they the same, or not? Why? Was the applicable theory used? If so, was it proven or disproven? If not used, why not? What was substituted—expedient actions, intuition, chance decision, creative thought of worker and/or supervisor?

In reviewing the caseworker's use of theory in his work, we must recognize the important influence of the agency's hierarchical structure, of which supervision is an integral part. The caseworker works under policies and pro-

The importance of the use of theory for effective placement practice.

cedures as interpreted by a supervisor; his concepts, diagnoses, and treatment processes are subject to the approval of a supervisor. Nevertheless, the caseworker on the job is the pivotal articulation of social work. The ideal practice performance develops from the caseworker's understanding of theory blended with the policies and procedures of the agency by which he is employed. Let us turn to considerations of his performance.

Basic Reason for Placement

Foster home placement in its very essence emphasizes some inadequacy of the parents at the time of placement. Sometimes the natural parent has so judged himself; sometimes the judgement has been imposed upon him by society. The fact of parental failure is the basic point in child placement, and the major theoretical basis for prognostication that the child will be injured if he continues in his parents' care under the prevailing circumstances. This fact of parental inadequacy is the most difficult reality which practice has to take into account, as juxtaposed to it are the theories of child development which indicate that the child experiences his parent's inadequacies in combination with whatever love and care the parent has extended, however slight.

These issues are troublesome, in that removal of the child must necessarily tear at his investment in his parents. We have sometimes ineptly sought to resolve our practical dilemma by assuring the child that his investment in his parents is all right and will be protected, while denying him fulfillment of that investment by replacement. When the caseworker makes a defective resolution of this conflict the foster parents and the parents will be seriously hindered in their work with the child, for both are dependent upon the caseworker for guidance.

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The first constructive step in practice approach to the interaction of the natural parent in the foster family constellation is the caseworker's acceptance of the faults of the natural parents, both *personal* and *parental*. To achieve such acceptance it is necessary to avoid extreme attitudes, such as an inclination to believe that the natural parents must not be submerged in the new relationships with the foster parents, or its opposite, that the natural parents must necessarily be submerged in the new relationships with foster parents.

Customarily, the caseworker begins practice with "adjusted" attitudes: the job demands a conscious position toward natural parents and their role in the life of the placed child. Good practice is pledged when the caseworker has "adapted" an open mind, guided by theoretical formulations.¹ However, it is easy to superimpose a conscious effort of acceptance upon underlying attitudes of antagonism to the natural parent in many respects, or upon underlying attitudes which cause the caseworker to relate to the natural parent in unrealistic ways. We also know that undigested theory leaves even the conscious effort to correctly assess the natural parent greatly wanting.

The Child's Positive Response to Placement

One important fact should remain clear to us: that the child is in some way quite aware of the deficiency of his parents. If he is old enough he is consciously measuring them in terms of their success in meeting his needs; if he is too young to use conscious assessments, he is experiencing emotional deficits as a result of the parental inadequacy. He must then necessarily respond with some measure of relief and gratitude when these inadequacies are counterbalanced with constructive care through placement.

I would suggest that below the age of super-ego formation the child experiences no guilt about placement and cannot at any future time in his life activate true guilt feelings about it. A person placed away from his natural parents in babyhood, who is exposed to

derision or blame about his placement at a later point in life, will exhibit some negative effects from the derisive insult or the blaming censorship. But such effects have a social derivation, and it is we who have so often erroneously connected them with mythical, mysterious longings for the biological parent. It is necessary to give as much thought and attention to this positive of "relief of stress" in placement as to the negative of "longing" for the natural parent. The non-libido schools of psychiatry, as represented by Sullivan and Horney, particularly those stressing acculturation, have much to offer processes of placement.²

Facing the Parents' Inadequacy

In any case, whatever the child's capacity to bear the separation, once it is inflicted we do best not to contradict ourselves by denying its utter necessity, or by condoning such denial by foster parents. Denial of the parental inadequacy flows forward to the child, and backward to the natural parent, whether it is generated by interaction with the caseworker, or with the foster parents. This false note inhibits successful casework supervision. "If my parent is not incapable," the child might ask, "why am I in a foster home?" "You' took the child," the parent might say. "This is the evidence of my incapacity; then why do you still hold me responsible and remain expectant?"

Denial also creates an inability to deal frankly with the parental inadequacies exhibited, often causing the caseworker to stir vain hopes, to apologize, to excuse, to explain—all gloss-overs which only highlight the stark reality; and the years pass by, leaving everyone in the constellation unable to destroy the façades which obscure the situation. The child, although he loves his parents and is protective of them, is also sensitive to their failure.³ Whereas he will be hurt and damaged by derogation of, or condescension toward them, he will be greatly helped when mature personalities whom he trusts support him in facing the reality of his parents' failures or shortcomings.

² See Harry Stack Sullivan, *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry*, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., N.Y., 1953, pp. 110-122.

³ Dorothy Hutchinson, "The Placement Worker and the Child's Own Parents," *Social Casework*, July 1954.

¹ See Charlotte Towle, *The Learner in Education for the Professions*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1954, pp. 7-11.

The child most damaged by unfaced, obscured parental failures is the child doomed to "long-term" placement, where parental incompetence is underlined boldly by every month, every birthday, every holiday, but the phantom possibility of the parental re-coup is held forth in some nebulous way—in spite of the whispered "His mother will probably never show up," of the caseworker to the foster parents. The foster parent doesn't know what to do with such uncertain certainties, and so remains suspended in the child's life: "Be a good boy so your mother will be proud of you; she may come for you some day." Or the foster parent establishes a nervous claim in forbidding discussion of the natural parents on the rationale that they will not show up anyway.⁴

In view of the theory, how does it happen that practice brings so few charges of abandonment before the court? When we feel that rehabilitation is impossible or improbable, why are we so slow to risk our diagnoses? Why does the chance postal card at Christmas time, after five years of silence, take on such ominous proportions to the caseworker? We harass and cling to devitalized, pathology-ridden parents who are bewildered by our demands that they continue to participate in the life of a child whose welfare they have long since ceased to regard as their concern.

I suggest that we have not used theory constructively to aid us in establishing diagnostic processes and professional convictions. We may be at the mercy of the chance incident rather than supported by the guidance of accumulated evidence. I suggest also that we are afraid of natural parents and feel that we cannot war with them, cannot deprive them. The tragedy is that so often the thing we guard for them so zealously is not of value to them, but we credit it to them through incorrect theoretical formulations of our own, or through our unresolved feelings about the claims of biological parenthood.

Foster home placement can best serve the family in which the parental inadequacy is likely to be resolved in ways that will lead to the rehabilitation of the child with his parent or parents as rapidly as possible. The foster

parents do not become parent surrogates; they supplement or complement the care of the child in those ways in which natural parents find themselves constricted. This point becomes blurred because in our work with natural parents we are often trying to prop up the depleted ego of a pathological personality, frequently a personality which cannot develop parental adequacy. Supplementation of parenthood is impossible with impossible parents. Foster home care should be extended

"... only in instances where it would be used toward solving a parent's problem with respect to the child. This means that we would not offer this care for undefined periods of time or for undefined reasons. Our goal would be to help the parent recognize the problems in this situation and use the period of care toward their solution and to facilitate the child's return home."⁵

The Role of the Natural Parents

The circumstances of placement having been established, the natural parents' place in the foster family must be conceptualized by the caseworker. The degree of parental competition which is likely to exist between the natural parents and the foster parents must be assessed. This competition is inherent in placement, since the "failing" parent must be surpassed by the "competent" foster parent in at least one area. The caseworker's task is to create an atmosphere in which child, foster parent and parent will be able, if not willing, to accept this state of affairs.

From the day of placement the particulars of the natural parent's incapacity should recede, and the focus should be on his achievement of parental competence. When the caseworker's assessment of rehabilitation is realistic—that is, consistent with the norms of the parent where these norms meet minimal societal demand—the parent will necessarily be hopeful about re-establishing competence. Absence of parental hope, to be distinguished from bravado or aggression, is an important diagnostic cue. The parent who is capable of recovering his child is hopeful, unless the caseworker is communicating, or permitting the foster parents to communicate, an expectation of failure.

⁴ See "Is Foster Care the Answer?" by Esther P. Hill, *Public Welfare*, April, 1957.

⁵ Emily Mitchel Wires, "Long-Time Care in a Public Child-Placing Agency," *Social Casework*, May 1951, p. 202.

When the natural parent presents himself to the foster parent, his story with the child is already told. This is bad for his self-confidence, and for the task that he has of making someone else feel confidence in him. After placement, his attitude toward the child's adjustment and the foster parents may tend to rest more on how the foster parents treat him than on how they treat the child. The caseworker must be alert to such parental judgments, for the longer distortions of perception persist, the dimmer the prognosis for rehabilitation. Although the foster parents' treatment of the natural parent is indicative of their interaction with the child, it cannot be viewed as a model of their treatment of the child.

The foster parents' picture of the natural parent is overdetermined by the aforementioned competition, by the expectation of the agency that the foster parent will "get along with" or "accept" the natural parent and his prior claims to the child and by whatever degree of wonderment, or resentment, or sympathy the foster parent has for the natural parent's position. Out of all these factors the caseworker extracts his concept of the natural parent's role in placement, and then gears his supervisory activity to support that role. He must make a competent interpretation of his diagnosis to the natural parents, the foster parents, and the child; it is new to all of them. The natural parent has the hardest task. On his success in reordering his own life depends the decision about rehabilitation, and thus the future planning of the child and the foster parents.

Parent's Responsibility for the Child

That the natural parent will retain whatever responsibilities of child care he reasonably can should be clear in the mind of the worker. It is customary to relegate the parent to the narrow confines of financial and affectional responsibilities; let us examine these briefly.

The worker can lose sight of the financial responsibilities which the parent continues to carry, because the agency's supplementary payments often dwarf the parent's payments or because the irregularity of the parent's payment makes it seem negligible. But when we treat it as negligible, we are ignoring its

importance as an expression of his view of the placement. Payment may emanate from guilt or from love, from fear of the court or the agency, or from an attempt to buy the good will of all the adults involved. Whatever the meaning, the caseworker's control of the case is better if the meaning of parental payment is understood and used in the interpretation of the parental role. And when parents are contributing, foster parents and foster children should know it.

Affectional responsibilities are easily granted the parent, so it is thought, by all parts of the foster home triangle. The natural parent and the child are the first to discover that this is more easily said than done. Continuing, developing affection demands an effective life-exchange. Past contributions to our well-being may warrant gratitude or reverence, but only current personal performance maintains a *place* for an individual in the current scheme of our love and our life. And to give love, we must have at our disposal some valid and acceptable ways of expressing it. Affectional responsibilities cannot be discharged in the vacuum of a visit to a foster home which consigns the natural parent to a "company" seat in the living room for an hour, nor in a bi-monthly visit to the agency to "see" the child. Affection is nurtured in the exchanges of relationship where each does something for the other. The caseworker must help establish ways in which the natural parent can reinforce his own affection and the child's. The logic and the need for this must be interpreted to the foster parents.

The child is the great juggler in the affectional department in foster home placement. The foster parents have possession, while the natural parents have prior claim. Every help must be offered the child as he shares himself in many directions. Just as the foster parents must support the child's own parents, the natural parents must support the foster parents. One of the ways in which the natural parent can express his love is by understanding the child's growing attachment to good foster parents. When the natural parent is supportive of the foster home rather than resistive, antagonistic or sabotaging, the worker and the natural parent will have a greater measure of effectiveness within the foster

home constellation. A supportive attitude permits the natural parent to relate to the child in a reality context, and to keep intact his place as parent-temporarily-out-of-commission through his recognition of the foster parents' value.

Where guardianship is removed from the parent, there is need for further development of constructive use of legal residual parental rights in both theory and practice. Residual legal rights are true grief-makers. Whenever the parent's contact with the child is primarily out of the exercise of his legal rights, little is to be gained in terms of relationship. When the parent maintains interaction with his child solely through the exercise of his legal right, he perpetrates an aggression against the child in the worst possible circumstance. Offering almost nothing of himself, he wishes to receive an expression of affirmation of his worth as a parent from the child.

Practice has been more responsive to the great pathology inherent in the situation than theory. Faced with the problem, practice has handled it as best it could, often by limiting the parent's rights still further by forbidding visiting, for example.

Visiting by Natural Parents

Visiting sustains the positive aspects of relationship between the child and his parent. In any instance where the natural parent is to continue influential with the child, the question is never whether he is to visit or not, but only when he shall visit, and how. These visits should be considered by the caseworker not only in terms of the foster family's convenience and its work with the child, but in terms of the child's accustomed expectation from his parent, and the parent's understanding and projection of his role. Where these factors are so conflicting as to warrant recommendations of no visiting, we must face the implication that the parent cannot be a significant or constructive figure in the child's life. We must then plan to replace the natural parent by a permanent surrogate parental figure.

Theoretically, the caseworker should have control over the contacts between the foster family and the natural family. Practically, this is often more fancy than fact. Explora-

tion and/or chance revelations frequently show that foster families have a wider knowledge of, and more contact with, the child's natural relatives (even cousins and third cousins) than the agency may be aware of, and even that contacts with former foster parents of the child occur. If the caseworker is not alert, the foster parent may clutch control of these situations to himself. Refinement of skill is required in both the casework probing and directing in order to keep the channel of confidences open.

The parental visit offers opportunity for either natural parent or foster parent to sabotage the other. The visiting parent may overwhelm the child with gifts; make rosy promises; emphasize his great desire to have the child and damn the agency or the court that keeps himself and child separated; provide lavish recreation; be permissive; deny the need for, and value of, the foster home; refute the foster parents; attack and derogate the foster family.

Foster parents may take a negative and dim view of the child's contact with his parents; or they may take an overly optimistic view, enjoining the child to enjoy himself, or turning the child over to the natural parent with such finality that the child is overwhelmed with ambivalence and anger. Foster parents sabotage by never having time for the visits, by never having space for the parent in the home, by refusing to participate in the visiting and by silence about it—the child slips out to the visit and back from it. A supportive orientation to these visits is as necessary from foster parents as from natural parents. Many foster parents are first awakened from a fond dream of possession by the initial activity of the natural parent.⁶

Re-Uniting Families

To accept the theory that foster home care should be temporary (other than in the proven exception) is to plan toward rehabilitation at intake of placement. In the process of rehabilitation the predominant task of the caseworker is to help the natural parent find and main-

⁶ Wires, *op. cit.*, p. 205. "The part played by the foster parents in strengthening the child-parent relationship is another area in which we are examining our thinking and practice. They can no longer look for the satisfaction of replacing the parents in the child's affections, or for the satisfaction of securing a child of their own."

tain his proper role during placement. Much depends upon the caseworker's skill in aiding the natural parent to repair his emotional, or intellectual, or environmental incapacity. Competent casework guidance in this regard may well serve to decrease the frequency of the "long-term" placement caused by errors due to the bewilderment and ineptitude of the parent at the beginning of the child's stay in the foster home. Destructive seduction and hostility with its resultant defeat of the relationship between child and parent can often be avoided, when the natural parent is guided to demonstrate his intent to re-assume full responsibility for his child by his attitudes and behaviour during placement. Such a parent can proudly present his readiness for rehabilitation without aggression or defiance.

If rehabilitation is improbable at intake, some definite plan to review the case for rehabilitative planning should be made. When there is indication that constructive parental functioning cannot be achieved within a reasonable length of time, then we must become brave enough to accept the responsibility that defaulting parents place upon us—providing permanent care for their children and replacement, not substitution, by other parent figures. When severance with and replacement of parents is clearly indicated, many caseworkers fail to press for execution of effective plans because they remain haunted and pursued by the ghostly tentacles of absent and uncaring parents. Such replacement, however, is the logical conclusion of the failure to rehabilitate a family.

Conclusion

In conclusion, three major theoretical constructs in foster home care emerge: (1) Foster home care is ideally used as a temporary resource while the natural family of the placed child corrects the circumstances which necessitate the placement; (2) the goal of the foster home placement is to facilitate rehabilitation of the natural home with emphasis on the agency's aid and guidance to the natural parents; (3) natural parents must continue to exercise an increasingly constructive and dominant personalized role in the life of the child during placement. The order in which these observations are cited is im-

perative: if the first is not existent and exercised in the caseworker's conceptual approach to the case, the second is improbable, and the third is impossible.

The import of these constructs for practice warrant consideration of elevating them from "child welfare" principles to basic, generic casework principles, with emphasis on a stricter adherence to theory. Thus a more unified theoretical frame of reference might be provided for casework practitioners in their interaction between agencies and between practice specialties.

Keeping the balance between theory and activity constantly true by adequate examination will aid both the caseworker and the supervisor in objectively determining when treatment failures are due to the need for new diagnostic directions, and when such failures are due to the incompetence of caseworkers in their use of theoretical knowledge. Good practice is achieved when the caseworker is careful to theorize with adequate reference to practice, and to practice with sufficient reference to theory.

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THE USE OF REGULAR COMMUNITY FACILITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

B. Robert Berg

Director of Casework
Jewish Family & Children's
Service of Minneapolis
Minneapolis, Minnesota

A SOURCE of constant frustration for the social worker who has responsibility for children is the lack of adequate resources to meet special needs. While the larger communities sometimes have the range of facilities needed, there are invariably long waiting lists. The smaller communities, of course, cannot afford to maintain the variety of services which should ideally be available. Because of the lack of the specific kind of resource which is indicated, the agency often reluctantly accepts an alternative, less desirable plan for the youngster with special needs. Consequently, there are children who are in delinquency institutions or state hospitals only because the treatment of choice could not be obtained.

Our agency has found that in a remarkable number of instances, through the use of regular community resources, it has been possible to work out a sound program for children with special needs for whom the indicated services were not available. In the following pages I will illustrate how three kinds of organizations were able to broaden their services to meet special needs.¹

Use of a Resident Camp

Council Camp is an agency-operated resident camp,² designed to meet the recreational needs of "normal" boys and girls, age eight to fifteen. The camp has three three-week periods. Rather than giving one particular case history, I would like to mention some of the kinds of situations the camp accepted:

A thirteen-year-old totally blind boy spent a satisfying three-week period in a cabin of boys having no marked physical disabilities.

¹ Each of these organizations is a separate agency but they receive, in common with Jewish Family and Children's Service, part of their income from the Minneapolis Federation for Jewish Service.

² From 1957 to 1959 this camp, a private organization, was operated by the Emanuel Cohen Center of Minneapolis.

The flexible use of existing community resources when ideal services are not available.

The camp accepted several retarded or very limited youngsters within the regular program. In a few instances it was possible to give the retarded child a relatively pleasant and constructive vacation. However, in two instances the experience was an unhappy one. One boy of thirteen tried to run away after ten days, and had to be returned home. His own cabin group had accepted him fairly well and he seemed comfortable with them. Unfortunately his contacts with other children outside his group were often painful, marked by teasing, and the camp was unable to control this sufficiently. In another instance a retarded woman of twenty-six, physically childlike in appearance, succeeded in remaining for the three-week period and apparently found it gratifying. The camp, however, could not extend her stay because the demands on staff time were so great and some of the regular campers were reacting with confusion.

A fifteen-year-old boy who was involved in numerous car stealing incidents, already adjudicated delinquent and committed to the County Home School for Boys, was released to the camp for rehabilitation. He lived in a cabin with the other regular campers and participated in the regular camp. Careful limits and controls and intensive attention from the staff enabled him to complete the summer successfully, and in consequence he was returned home rather than to the institution.

A group of ten emotionally disturbed boys, all in casework treatment during the year, lived together with their therapist as a cabin group during a regular session, and participated in the regular camp program.³

In each of these instances, the camp prepared itself to meet the special needs of the children involved, within the framework of its regular program, by using professional supervision and guidance. Each child and his family were seen first in an effort to determine

³ For a full description of this group see "Combining Group and Casework Treatment in a Camp Setting," by B. Robert Berg, in *Social Work*, January 1960.

how the camp could be used. The realistic limitations were considered and goals were established. Once the camp director, the family, and the caseworker had agreed on the plan, the counselor to be used was selected and then briefed fully. Interpretation to the other members of the group was handled by the counselor, either collectively, individually, or both. The camp director and the casework consultant supervised the situation closely, in some instances on a daily basis. In most cases, the careful preparation and supervision made it possible for the camp to effectively serve a youngster who normally would have been rejected as a camper.

In agreeing to have Council Camp used to meet special needs in this way, the camp board of directors had two major fears: They were concerned with how the regular campers would react to the child who was in some way defective or strange. And they worried about possible negative community reaction and a branding of the camp as a place of and for the sick, retarded and delinquent.

Actual experience revealed that the regular campers benefited from living with or near a youngster with special needs. The children developed an understanding, tolerance and acceptance of other individuals with problems. They often derived personal satisfaction from giving help, such as guiding the blind boy. In no instance were we able to find negative effects on regular campers or on the program itself.

There was no negative reaction from the community either. For the most part the children with special needs fit into the regular program so smoothly that the parents of the regular campers were not aware of their uniqueness. There were a few telephone calls asking for an explanation, but these were easily and satisfactorily handled by brief interpretations.

Use of a Nursery School

The following two cases illustrate how a half-day nursery school,⁴ set up to accommodate sixty "average" children, ages three and four (in separate age groups), was able to help in cases where medical resources, if they

had been available, would have been the resource of choice.

Three-year-old Mary suffered from frequent blackouts, in which she would lose consciousness and fall. These occurred more frequently at times of stress. She had a defect in sugar metabolism, but the drug which served as a specific for this disease created an allergic reaction in the child. At the time that nursery school service was requested it was obvious that the youngster was often inducing the blackouts as a method of controlling her mother. In consequence, there was inadequate limit setting at home.

The youngster was admitted to the school with the understanding that her mother would come immediately to take her home following a blackout incident. Mary enjoyed the nursery school program and related positively to her teachers and peers. She had one blackout early in the school year and a near blackout not long after this. Her teachers quickly learned about her willful use of the blackout as a control device when she was frustrated or upset. They very firmly set limits for her, making it clear that having a blackout would not be allowed as a means of manipulation. Mary responded to the warmth and objective firmness by increasing her frustration tolerance. There were no further blackouts at school and they diminished greatly at home.

A six-year-old boy suffering from brain damage and intellectual retardation was permitted to remain in the nursery school program. The parents were resistant to special help for the child, and yet could not adequately meet his educational needs at home. In addition, the mother, who had suffered a post-partum psychosis when his younger brother was born, still had difficulty being a mother all day long. She needed a break during the day in order to be adequate the rest of the time.

The nursery school program was directly helpful to the child educationally, although it did not have the special equipment or trained staff that would be necessary for him to achieve his full potential. The greatest service was indirect: first, in giving the parents time to work on their feelings about the child's limitations and to gain an understanding of the special nature of his needs; and second, in affording the mother a period of relief during the day so that she was able to do a better job when he was home.

The plan was to get the child eventually to a special day care facility for brain damaged and retarded children. Because the nursery school accepted this very difficult case it was possible to make this referral successfully in a situation

⁴ Operated by the Jewish Community Center of Greater Minneapolis.

where it seemed likely that the parents would respond to too intense or rapid pressure for the plan the child needed by withdrawing him from help completely.

In both these cases the nursery school staff worked closely with the casework consultant, and the family was also seen by the caseworker.

Use of Temporary Residence Facility

Even those institutions still clinging to a program designed to serve "normal" dependent and neglected children are aware that their population will include youngsters with varying degrees of emotional disturbance. A survey of Minnesota's children's institutions, conducted by the Minnesota Association of Child Caring Institutions in 1957, found almost unanimous agreement that there was a trend towards more disturbed or problem children in institution populations.⁵ With these observations in mind, Oak Park Home⁶ felt that it could and should handle some frankly disturbed children, under close professional guidance, provided the group in residence could cope with the problem behavior.

The institution is intended to serve as a temporary residence facility for sixteen boys and girls, aged three to sixteen, who must be out of their own homes for a brief period due to a family emergency or crisis, or while a foster home is looked for. The length of care may be extended where this type of service seems particularly to meet the needs of the individual child, where a number of siblings are involved and it is felt they should not be separated, or where the parents are not yet able to accept foster home placement. Generally speaking, children are accepted only if they fall within the normal range of behavior.

The following case illustrates how this small institution was able to offer services to severely disturbed children, even with the limitations of a relatively untrained staff and no resident professionally trained individual to turn to for help.

Marc had lived alone with his widower father for three years, until his uncontrolled behavior made it no longer possible. The next year he lived

with various relatives, with each placement a failure. He was being seen privately by a psychiatrist, who recommended placement in a specific treatment institution in another state. The boy was thirteen at this time. The psychiatrist diagnosed him as a pre-psychotic. He was a child with limited frustration tolerance, very weak inner controls, and an inability to relate to adult or child on anything but a very superficial basis. He had frequent monumental temper outbursts. In addition he often refused to attend school. Neurological examinations showed definite signs of organic brain damage. Marc took considerable daily medication to control petit mal epileptic attacks.

The intake application for the out-of-state treatment institution had to go through a local agency. In evaluating the situation, the agency disagreed with the psychiatrist that Marc should be placed in the institution for several reasons: First, the institution required that the local agency work with the family towards the child's return, but the father refused any such involvement for himself. Second, the boy's lack of acceptance of long-distance separation made it apparent that he would fight treatment, and this institution asked for some motivation on the part of an entering child. And third, it seemed to us that the boy was entitled to a trial in a boarding home locally before more drastic treatment was considered.

Marc was admitted to Oak Park Home with the following plan: he would continue to see the psychiatrist every other week; the agency would work with the father on placement and his own role in the boy's difficulties; the agency would give the institution intensive guidance and direction in handling the child; and, the psychiatrist, agency and institution would collaborate closely. In response to this plan Marc settled down easily, had no real difficulty getting to school, and presented no major problems through lack of controls. Two months later when summer vacation started, his adjustment was good enough to justify taking a risk on having him attend summer camp for three weeks (the camp mentioned earlier). He did sufficiently well at camp to return for another successful three-week period that summer.

During the fall and winter his adjustment continued to be infinitely better. There were a few severe temper outbursts, but these seemed to be in relation to his strong drive to live with his father again. In view of the sustained, really acceptable adjustment he had made, which suggested that with ongoing out-patient treatment he had sufficient strengths and controls to live in the community, he was returned to his father's

⁵ B. Robert Berg, "Survey of Minnesota's Children's Institutions," a paper presented at the Minnesota Welfare Conference, March 25, 1958.

⁶ A privately owned and operated Jewish children's institution, licensed by the State of Minnesota.

home after only seven months. Since his return home his adjustment has been acceptable and his school attendance excellent.

We are not trying to suggest that this boy is cured and that no further help is needed. His bi-weekly psychiatric sessions continue and his father is in contact with the casework agency. What has been demonstrated is that even in a very severe and unpromising kind of case, it was possible to make a helpful and relatively successful plan through the willingness of an institution to accept a youngster whose needs they generally feel incapable of meeting.

Not all such difficult cases were successful. A twelve-year-old Indian boy was sent to a state training school after only a month at Oak Park Home. The major problem here was the local community's inability to accept his behavior, in particular his approaching women to suggest sexual contacts. In another instance, a thirteen-year-old girl had to be hospitalized because the degree of her emotional upset and defiant acting out made it impossible to contain her. However, the successes seem to outweigh the failures. Even where we do not succeed we have the satisfaction of knowing that every possible effort was made to set up a sound treatment plan for each child.

Conclusion

It is our belief that family and children's agencies, so frequently faced with planning for children with special needs where the ideal treatment source is unavailable, can often find an adequate setting through a more flexible use of existing organizations. This means a selling job on the part of the casework agency, and a willingness for intensive collaboration and support between the agencies concerned.

Unfortunately, no formula can be given as to how many children with special needs can fit into any particular program. So many variables—such as present grouping, quality of staff, nature of the problem—complicate the situation. In our experience, each successful effort by the formerly reluctant resource seems to broaden the limits of their service, and makes them more willing to accept children with special needs.

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CONNECTICUT EXTENDS AGENCY ADOPTION SERVICES*

C. Rollin Zane

Executive Director
Children's Services of Connecticut
Hartford, Connecticut

A good deal of interest has been aroused throughout the country in Connecticut's experience with legislation outlawing the gray and black markets in babies, and providing for responsible professional services to all those involved in adoption proceedings.¹ In the main, people seem to want to know how the law, the second of its kind in the nation, came to be passed and how it has worked. It is to be hoped that our experience in Connecticut may have significance for other states which are contemplating the need for some form of legislation to control adoptive placements.

Our experience with the law during the past two years has been most successful, largely because our agencies have expanded their services to children, to unwed mothers and to adoptive parents to meet the growing work load resulting from the passage of the law. The fact that no effort was made in the 1959 Legislature to amend or repeal it, and that no such move is expected in the forthcoming legislative session, indicates that the law has been accepted in the state.

Connecticut has a long and substantial social work tradition. It has several voluntary agencies serving unwed mothers and placing children for adoption. The entire state is served by one or more of these agencies. In addition, the State Welfare Department, with district offices throughout the state, now provides some financial assistance to mothers under twenty-one, and places some children for adoption. The state's great wealth and its small size, which facilitates communication and united action, have helped in developing strong services.

* Given at the National Conference on Social Welfare, Atlantic City, at a CWLA meeting on June 7, 1960.

¹ Connecticut's adoption law of 1957 went into effect on July 1, 1958. It provides that no application to adopt a child shall be accepted by the probate courts unless the child sought for adoption has been placed by the state commissioner of welfare, after being committed to him by the juvenile court, or by a child welfare agency licensed by the commissioner. The only exceptions to these provisions are in the case of (1) a child sought for adoption by a step-parent, sister, brother, aunt, uncle or grandparent, or (2) a child received by the proposed adopting parents from an agency outside Connecticut with the written consent of the state welfare commissioner.

A description of the many steps that eventually led to the passage of Connecticut's adoption law in 1957.

I should like to think that the passage of the 1957 Adoption Bill in Connecticut came about largely as a result of the preceding twenty years' cultivation of responsible services by our Connecticut agencies. During these twenty years a climate of confidence in agency services had gradually been created. Perhaps no state is ready for drastic adoption legislation until dependable services have become readily available and an informed community becomes aware of them. Consequently, I shall discuss briefly significant legislation enacted and pertinent changes made by agencies to strengthen their services prior to 1957.

Improvements before the 1957 Law

Prior to 1940, only a few children were placed for adoption each year by Connecticut adoption agencies. At about that time it would appear that some of the agencies began to put less pressure upon unwed mothers to keep their children. With the growing professional character of agencies, there may have been a lessening of an unconscious punishing and moralizing attitude toward these mothers. I would believe that a deeper and more sensitive understanding of their problems and of the needs of their children began to develop. They began to plan co-operatively and persistently with parents for the long-time interests of their children, and began to move with more confidence toward adoption.

In 1940, there was a growing awareness among some of our voluntary agencies that children often were getting lost from their parents and growing up in boarding homes—often a long series of them—without permanent home ties. There was real concern about cases in which parents were unable or unwilling to plan for their children's future. Some agencies, by working more consistently, realistically and firmly with unwed mothers, helped many to make a responsible decision either to give parental care to their children or to consent to their being placed for adoption. Along with a more re-

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sponsible service to children and their mothers, professionally competent adoption programs naturally began to be developed. The growing money cost of boarding home care was another force prompting Connecticut agencies to place an increasing number of children for adoption. This is a legitimate force when used wisely in the truly best interests of children.

Connecticut still has a long way to go before all of its children in need of parents are given those parents. The appalling condition of foster care in this country, as described in *Children in Need of Parents*,² applies to my home state as it does to so many other states. But this indictment does not apply to all our individual voluntary agencies in Connecticut, nor has it applied for many years.

The changing community attitude toward the adoption of the children of unmarried mothers may have been a counterpart of the changing attitudes of social agencies toward unmarried mothers. Adopting children began to be an imaginative and socially approved way for childless couples to complete their own families, thus adding another stimulant to the development of agency adoption programs. The changes to which I have been referring, although they began before the war years of 1941 to 1945, were greatly accelerated after the war. In particular, it would appear that families were having more children of their own, and a couple who could not have children was much more apt to look with favor upon adopting them.

Some Significant Legislation

In 1943, Connecticut's concern about adoption practices was great enough to bring about the passage of legislation making it mandatory that our probate courts receive agency reports on all adoption petitions. This did not stop independent placements, of course, but it did mean that our probate judges began to receive agency reports on them as well as on agency placements. A weakness in this procedure was that agencies asked to report to the probate courts on independent adoption petitions began to find

themselves in the position of accepting placements they themselves would not have made. Reporting on a situation where a child has taken roots and where, in all probability, the child will continue to live, is quite a different matter than studying a home to determine whether a child should be placed there.

Nevertheless, the entry of a caseworker into these independent adoption situations may have been helpful in a number of ways. Couples could come to appreciate more fully the significance of the step they were taking. The entry of the social agency provided for some families a means to escape from an unwanted situation. The records show that the courts, on the basis of the agency reports, actually disapproved a fair number of petitions. A number of other petitions were withdrawn. In others, the court held up the granting of an adoption decree for a longer probationary period. Own mothers were seen, and to some extent had an increased opportunity to participate responsibly in the adoption procedure.

Connecticut appears never to have suffered from vicious black market practices, and it is probable that the 1943 legislation calling for agency reports on all adoption petitions discouraged such a development.

Another result of this first Connecticut legislation making it mandatory for agencies to report on all adoptions was that our judges of probate and our agencies began to work more often and more closely together, because the law put this responsibility on them. Agencies were careful not to advise or to instruct the judges, who took the responsibility of using these reports as they saw fit. This developing good working relationship bore fruit when the 1957 legislation on adoptions came before Connecticut's General Assembly.

At about this same time legislation was passed to protect children born out of wedlock, by discontinuing the use of the term "illegitimate" on birth certificates. Furthermore, when a child was adopted only his new name was shown on the certificate.

In 1945 one of our adoption agencies began charging fees, and since that time a number of our other voluntary agencies have

² Henry S. Maas and Richard E. Engler, *Children in Need of Parents*, Columbia University Press, N.Y., 1959. A digest of the book has been published by the League in pamphlet form.

followed suit. I believe this was another important step which strengthened agency adoption services in the state. One result was that additional financing was provided by these fees to develop agency programs. It is likely that the charging of fees also tends to make agencies more responsible for the services they are providing. And fee charging seems to gain respect for agencies from the public. Certainly in Connecticut most of the misgivings about this early step came from caseworkers rather than from board members or the community at large. These misgivings were natural enough, since a major change in agency policy and procedures was being made. Only a professionally competent and confident agency could responsibly have begun to pioneer a fee charging plan or, for that matter, should charge fees at any time.

Another pioneering move by a Connecticut agency a number of years ago was the initiation of group meetings with adoptive applicants. In recent years other voluntary and public agencies have followed suit. These group meetings are uniquely useful to agencies and applicants in communicating with each other. Moreover, they aid in bringing about desirable early withdrawals of some applicants and save valuable agency time.

Increasing Adoption Placements

Until approximately 1948 the State Welfare Department, which serves a large proportion of Connecticut children needing foster care, had no planned adoption program. Such a plan was begun at that time whereby a greatly increased percentage of children who had been committed to the state were placed for adoption. Although the department had several thousand children in care, it was placing only some thirty-five to forty children yearly in the early 1940's. By 1949 the number had increased to over one hundred yearly, and has steadily been maintained at this increased rate. Many of these children were adopted by the foster parents with whom they had been living, sometimes for years. We may have some misgivings about turning boarding homes into adoption homes, rather than developing a comprehensive adoptive placement service, yet on the whole, this change of attitude and

procedure on the part of the welfare department seems to have been a step forward. There is still a great need for the department to extend its program.

For many years, at least, some of our Connecticut agencies have not been content to find an adoption for just the "easy-to-place" child. We have been placing the hard-to-place children. The emphasis has been on the individual child's need for a permanent home if he can use such a home and if a home can be found for him. I believe this attitude and conviction toward adoption services has helped us in Connecticut to extend and strengthen our services.

In Connecticut we have also been engaged in what I believe to be a countrywide trend—that of placing children for adoption at an earlier age. It would appear now that most of the babies and infants available for adoption are being placed before they are three months old. Some children are being placed directly from hospitals even though guardianship usually cannot be obtained by agencies in Connecticut until the children actually are living in homes.

Some of our voluntary agencies in Connecticut have accepted responsibility for carrying a role in the placement and the adoption of overseas children, in order to give needed protection to children and adoptive parents. Although we may question some or many aspects of the overseas programs, on the whole it would seem that agency participation is highly desirable as long as the program continues.

To help overcome our difficulty in placing Negro children for adoption, we have developed "Homes for Children" programs, first on a local basis and now on a statewide basis. These programs were focused, particularly, on arousing interest in the plight of our Negro children who had remained in own homes when they needed placement, who had been living in institutions for many years because boarding or adoptive homes had not been found for them, or who were living in boarding homes although they had been free for years to be placed for adoption. With the sustained and aggressive efforts of these programs, together with accelerated agency activities during the past few years, we have

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been able to serve a greatly increased number of minority group children in accordance with their needs.

An interesting result of our Homes for Children programs has been a markedly increased number of Negro unmarried mothers coming to the agencies. So in our efforts to serve Negro children better, we have also found the opportunity to reach out and serve Negro unmarried mothers better. I should like to cite two examples of aggressive reaching out to serve unmarried mothers. First, at least three of our voluntary agencies, for several years, have advertised their services in the classified columns of our daily newspapers. This has brought a substantial number of unmarried mothers to these agencies who might otherwise have never learned of them and who, consequently, could readily have made ill-considered plans for themselves and their babies. Second, agency brochures describing agency services to unwed mothers have been widely distributed.

For many years social agencies in Connecticut have been aware of an existing gray market in babies. It was believed that part of the cause of this market was the lack of good communication and of good working relationships between all the professions concerned with adoption. In 1955 the Greater Hartford Community Council set up an Adoption Committee for the express purpose of bringing about better understanding and teamwork among lawyers, clergymen, doctors and social workers. The committee learned that in the Hartford area it was the doctors who were most involved in independent placements. The committee members, representing all the professions, were awakened by the facts that parental rights were not clearly defined, that anyone could place a child for adoption, that social studies were not required before placement.

The findings of a 1955-1956 study of illegitimacy, made by the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health Section of the State Department of Health, helped to bring about changes in agency practices. It was learned that a mother's plan for herself and baby was markedly influenced by whether or not she was assured of help with the costs of maternal care. The study indicated that renewed efforts

should be made to reach mothers earlier in their pregnancy, that closer working relationships among all the professional groups concerned with unwed parents were called for, and that all of the community resources needed in serving mothers should become more readily and fully available to them. Real progress along all these lines have been made in recent years, aided greatly by the special funds made available for medical care by the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health.

The Adoption Law of 1957

All of these progressive steps culminated in the passage of the Adoption Bill of 1957. The executive director of the Connecticut Child Welfare Association—a citizen's group that has promoted child welfare legislation for some forty years in our state and which spearheaded the drive for the adoption bill—was elected to the 1957 General Assembly. I have no doubt that her on-the-spot influence was greatly felt. It was noteworthy, too, that the probate judges in Connecticut, individually and through their statewide assembly, had come to have faith in our adoption agencies and that, consequently, they supported the bill. The State Welfare Department, the voluntary agencies, the Community Councils and National Association of Social Workers, all were active in its support. There was no organized opposition to the bill, although individual doctors, lawyers and clergymen did oppose it. Shortly before the hearing, when it was thought opposition might develop, board and committee members of the voluntary agencies made scores of telephone calls to members of the Legislature in support of the bill.

During the legislative session meetings were held to discuss the adoption bill, and a very considerable interest in it was aroused throughout the state. At the legislative hearing itself, two factors stood out. One was the support given the bill by a spokesman for a large religious group in the state. The other was the moving and even dramatic support given by adoptive parents who had received their children through agencies.

It has been suggested that one weakness in the bill is that there is no fine or imprisonment penalizing those who may continue to make independent placements. However,

there is good reason to believe that a penalty is not needed: We are not aware that there has been a deliberate flouting of the bill, except possibly in a very few cases. There were, of course, a small number of independent placements made after it went into effect, but they appear to have been made through ignorance of the law. It is believed, too, that a few unwed mothers have left the state to have their babies and perhaps to give them up for adoption elsewhere, but this would point to the need for countrywide adoption legislation rather than to any fault in the Connecticut legislation.

After the law was passed, the Child Welfare Association held a statewide meeting with a representative from the State of Delaware, who told us how their similar adoption law had worked and what problems we might encounter. Statewide committees of the Child Welfare Association have been active in helping to implement the law. Our welfare councils continued their committee activities. Attractive brochures explaining the law have been printed and distributed widely among all professional groups.

Since the passage of the adoption bill, our voluntary placement agencies in Connecticut, on the whole, have given services to unwed mothers top priority. Not only have they been served promptly but there has been a broadening of the services provided. The emphasis no longer is on helping a mother to make plans for her child, but rather on helping her with the manifold problems with which she is faced.

It was necessary that we treat the implementation of the adoption bill as an emergency situation. It is possible that in giving this priority to unwed mothers some agencies have had to neglect other phases of their programs. Nevertheless, we have strengthened agencies by increasing staff and by providing funds to help unmarried mothers whatever their need. It has seemed to me a real tribute to our voluntary agencies as well as to our state health and welfare departments that they went into action and met the challenge with which they were faced. Beginning in 1957, unwed mothers started coming to some agencies in much larger numbers. We do not know, precisely, the reasons for this, although

we believe that even if the adoption law had not been introduced more mothers would have come to us simply because there was a more aggressive reaching out to them.

Developments since the Law Was Passed

What have we been doing in Connecticut, since the adoption law was passed in 1957, to strengthen further our agency adoption services?

Since 1957, one of our children's institutions, which believed it could not afford to develop a residential treatment program for children, decided to develop a maternity home program. This decision was entered into responsibly, and has helped our agencies to meet the increased responsibilities coming to them in recent years in serving unwed mothers.

In order to strengthen adoption services, at least one of the Connecticut agencies recently began a subsidization plan for some adoptive parents. It is believed that some children might be placed with people who agencies believe would make excellent adoptive parents, but who could not take on this responsibility without some financial help. At least one Community Council committee is working on this concept.

Another development since the passage of the adoption law is that hospitals are trying to enlist the active support of physicians in making earlier referrals of unwed mothers to child placing agencies. One hospital, for instance, has made a survey of its referrals during the past year, hoping that its efforts to make early referrals will show that unwed mothers have been able to plan with less pressure and more care, and that shorter placement of children in boarding homes was needed.

At least one of our agencies is experimenting with having each unmarried mother consult with legal counsel before giving consent to the agency to place her child for adoption. This might be a commonplace move in many states, but many Connecticut agencies have not found it necessary. It may be a step forward in strengthening services.

Still another step taken by our agencies in expanding adoption services has been the

development of a Statewide Adoption Exchange. We expect that some agencies will refer children for whom they lack adoptive homes to other agencies with available prospective homes.

Further Helpful Legislation

In 1959 legislation was passed that provided, under given circumstances, for the termination of parental rights of children committed to the state welfare commissioner. It is believed that this will enable the commissioner to protect the well-being of committed children more readily, and thus to place them for adoption without protracted and harmful delay.

Additional legislation passed in 1959 makes it possible for an unwed mother over the age of twenty-one to request her own removal as guardian directly to the probate court, so that a voluntary agency might place her child for adoption. Heretofore a relative was needed to make the petition.

Another act provided that the birth certificate of the child of an unwed mother could be registered in the town of birth and need not be sent to the town of residence of the mother.

Still another act passed by our 1959 Legislature provides for maternity home licensing. It is believed that the standards being developed under this law, which is administered by the State Department of Health, have already led to the improvement of maternity home service in Connecticut. These standards provide that every unwed mother in Connecticut maternity homes now must be provided with casework services, through which she can be helped to come to a thoughtful decision about the future of her child.

In summary, we in Connecticut believe our 1957 Adoption Law has been a giant step forward in protecting and serving children and mothers and adoptive parents. We believe we were able, responsibly, to take this step because of the groundwork laid in past years. And, we know that the law itself is only another beginning for us—there is need for unrelenting efforts to implement the bill, and many of our children continue to be in need of parents.

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CHILDREN IN NEED OF PARENTS: The Legal Problems

Judge Harold N. Fields

Juvenile Court of Marion County
Indianapolis, Indiana

IN reviewing the legal problems discussed in *Children in Need of Parents*,¹ indicating their implication for child care and the steps communities should take to assure most constructive court decisions for the children and their parents, I shall probably exceed a review of the legal problems themselves—for they are inevitably intermingled with the community concern for children, the existence and adequacy of private and public child care agencies, and community willingness to expend funds for child services.

The following statements in this book serve as an excellent background:

"Everywhere that our research took us we found a feeling for children." (p. 8)

"For children in need of parents the community will pay the price sooner or later." (p. 397)

"In the United States there are approximately one quarter million children who are without homes of their own." (p. 1)

"Only a few will be adopted." (p. 2)

"Many such children seemed likely to grow up in agency homes with little sense of permanency." (p. 355)

These quotations indicate that in the United States, as demonstrated by the sampling of communities, there is a definite need for every community to analyze its efforts in child protection. The transmittal through successive generations of the unresolved parental needs of any given child, to say nothing of such a large group of children, creates an ever-increasing number of "children in need of parents." The ultimate future of the community and perhaps the nation could well depend on the recognition given this problem, and the constructive steps taken to meet and eliminate the further problems it creates.

Maas and Engler state:

"In the broader sense, the only preventative for children having to live unnecessarily in foster

Going beyond the legal problems, Judge Fields points out the steps communities should take to assure constructive court decisions for children and their parents.

care is a healthy, economically prosperous, morally strong American family and a healthy, prosperous, and morally strong community."

The best of laws administered by the finest of judges, supplemented by the necessary private and public agencies, will serve only to lessen the ill effects of nonresponsible adults in the community. This does not militate against the necessity of meeting this immediate problem, but it does emphasize that law *per se* cannot perform the miracle of creating a moral community and responsible parents, and that the community through nonlegal channels must accept the responsibility for the operation of community standards and values that will diminish the need for recourse to law to protect children from their own parents.

The study basically divides the operation of the legal system in a given community into two categories—systems oriented toward "parents' rights" and systems oriented toward "children's rights." It should be pointed out that a third right, that of the state's interest in a child under the doctrine of *parens patriae*, is the basis on which community action through legal systems is invoked to balance the "parents' rights" and "children's rights."

The study makes clear that in these communities, and inferentially in all communities, there are differences between laws of different states, as well as differences in local laws within the same state, and some variation in administration of a law within a community. Variation seems to exist even when the basic concept underlying various laws, and perhaps even their wording, is identical. There is variation shown in regard to adoption or availability for adoption by termination of parental rights.

Keeping in mind that appeals are generally precluded by the economic status of the parties involved as well as by other factors in cases concerning children, it is apparent that for practical purposes such courts are almost

¹ Henry S. Maas and Richard E. Engler, Jr., *Children in Need of Parents*, Columbia University Press, N.Y., 1959.

in fact "the court of last resort." Any legal problems or problems in law therefore merit community study and corrective legislative action, or other action as required.

The Legal Problems

The legal problems or problems in law resolve themselves into the following categories:

1. The policy of the state in protection of children's rights is often not adequately expressed. This is a legal problem only in that laws are involved. It is basically a matter of legislative determination of what the policy of the state shall be in protecting its interest in children and defining parental rights and duties as well as children's rights.

2. There is need for spelling out, by law, the function of administrative agencies and judicial units and the means and methods they are to use in enforcing those rights, consistent with constitutional limitations. Again, this is a legal problem only in that laws are involved. The community through its legislation must decide who is to do each and all of the steps required to insure child protection, including who shall entertain complaints of child need, investigate them, initiate legal action to correct the situation, and administer the judgment entered by a court. Otherwise "twilight zones" of responsibility exist; the end result is that no one exercises full responsibility, and foster care is thus prolonged.

3. Division of authority and even conflict of authority exist when judicial responsibility is divided between courts in the same community, each dealing with some facet of protecting the state's interest in children. Where one court determines when children are neglected and another court determines when some of them are to be adopted, there will undoubtedly be an unfortunate prolongation of foster care in some instances. Again, the proper legal system is a matter of legislative determination.

Since child problems in a community arise from multiple causes, all facets might well be dealt with in a single court setting, provided that it is adequately staffed. A "family court" may be the solution in many communities. A single court might well provide con-

tinuity and unanimity of action that could improve child care in any community.

4. The study found that some problems are created by the personal concepts of the judge, when indefinite statutes create the opportunity or need for personal interpretation out of his background, wisdom, experiences, aggressiveness, personality, and knowledge of available resources. The solution is proper statutory guidance and selection of a proper judicial figure—whatever the method of selection or election—and provision for administrative means of carrying out the judgments of the court.

Since few appeals are taken, statutes should be definite enough to preclude the possibility of personal, and possibly strained, interpretations by the judge. He should not be left to guess whether "emotional neglect" by the parents is included in "condition of want or suffering," nor to determine from the evidence alone whether the non-exercise of parental rights and failure to perform parental duties for an unprescribed period of time is sufficient to terminate parental rights and authorizes adoption. The courts should administer the law, not make it.

5. Some legal problems or problems in administering the law arose from the fact that ". . . there are serious weaknesses in some communities between the courts, the bar, and social agencies." (p. 394) There are undoubtedly various reasons for this, including indefiniteness of statutes, personality problems, political problems, facility problems, concept differences, professional efficiency problems, and many others. It might also be said that there is a language barrier within a common language. Lawyers are perhaps prone to use professional language in dealing with non-lawyers, but along with laymen, they shy away from the necessity of interpreting some of the social work "jargon" through which they are asked to understand the social work professional viewpoint on child care.

On page 289, I found the following:

"A general hypothesis which developed was that where there is much segmental differentiation in a community and the participants have had many experiences with difference, dependency per se will be less a differentiating phenomenon."

I realize that this book is oriented to professional social workers, but its message should be heard and understood by all concerned with aspects of the total problem, including those who hold seats in the legislative halls. The foregoing quote is somewhat symptomatic of the oral and written expression of "social work" language.

A proper solution of community weaknesses in dealing with children's problems requires an understanding of the weakness, understanding of the aims and purposes of all concerned professions, and a common effort through necessary channels, legislative or non-legislative, to eliminate the weaknesses.

6. Where recourse to legal action is necessary, effective means have not always been provided to carry out a disposition ordered by a court. This is not primarily a legal problem, except that the community tends to associate the failure with the court's responsibility. A judge cannot order services that do not exist, utilize facilities that have not been built, authorize expenditure of funds that are not available, create adoptive parents for the "non-adoptables," or force adoption through administrative agencies—even though parental rights have been terminated—where the agencies are not adequately staffed. "For children in need of parents the community will pay the price sooner or later." That price may be higher later. The apportionment of available resources to the "most needy" instead of the "needy" is not protecting the interest of the state in a child.

What the Community Must Do

In discussing what steps communities should take to assure the most constructive court decisions for the children and their parents, it becomes apparent that those most concerned, the children, have no voice in what shall be done or how it shall be done. This means that the community must act for those who cannot speak for themselves. Through the collective knowledge of the various sciences, professions, and individuals, a program for the complete protection of the state's interest in a child must be instituted.

The first major question to be settled is the defining of the community. Is it a town,

county, parish, ward, or state? Maas and Engler note that in some towns localized standards of values, morals, rights, and duties are in conflict with those acceptable in the larger community and the state. However, it should be noted that the "authoritative" or legal approach to protection of children has been settled by legal precedent as the right and duty of the state. It would seem therefore that there should be integrated effort of all people within a given state.

It is a legislative function to provide the statutes for the administrative and court services to effectively carry out the policy of the state in child care. But it must be remembered that legislation does not spring into existence. To provide the necessary background upon which the legislature can effectively act, there must be preparatory study of the problem and coordination of the knowledge of various professions and individuals. Such effort must be continuing, so that changing situations and demonstrated inadequacy of initial efforts can be corrected.

The second step is to formulate, for enactment into law, a statement of the conditions which must exist before the protective arm of the state can be invoked. Statutory definitions which fall short of this are neither a guide to parents as to their duties to their children, nor an assistance to the administrative or judicial agencies which must try to solve the problems of the communities' children. For example, if adultery on the part of a parent is to be a basis of "neglect," before this is incorporated in a statute the state's policy with regard to what constitutes adultery under the law—e.g., the rate of incidence and the presence or absence of remuneration—should be settled, and not left to individual interpretation. If "emotional neglect" is as detrimental to a child as "physical neglect," then a measurable standard must be developed, means of proof defined, and provision made for a remedy to solve the problems of the child and not merely punish the offending parent. To leave such matters to possible personal interpretations is to invite "poor" court decisions.

The third major step is to plan constructively for legislation which will make clear the function of each person involved, and its relation to the functions of others.

There should be no doubt as to responsibility for investigation and initiation of legal action to remedy a child's problems.

If multiple courts are to be available for legal actions in protection of children, then certainly their jurisdiction and responsibility must be carefully planned and coordinated to avoid inaction, conflict of planning for a child, and lack of responsibility for insuring that the courts' disposition of a child is carried out.

The agency or agencies charged with carrying out the ordered disposition should be made sufficiently responsible to the court to insure its accomplishment.

The fourth major step is to determine staff needs and provide for an adequate, trained staff for every governmental agency involved in child protection services, whether it be a court, a department of welfare, or a diagnostic or disposition facility. This involves not only determining standards for appointment qualifications, case loads, efficiency criteria, and adequate salary levels to permit continuity of staff, but also providing the operating expenses necessary to do the job.

The fifth major step is to analyze the need and make provision for agencies and other facilities. A community needs shelter care, diagnostic, treatment, and disposition facilities, both medical and psychiatric, and substitute parental care facilities.

The sixth major step is to provide for the proper judicial figures to assume the tremendous responsibility of applying the law to each case involving the future well-being of a child. This involves determining personal characteristics, legal knowledge, social knowledge, and knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of other professions and occupations, which will be necessary to properly fulfill the assigned role.

The manner of selection or election, the tenure, the salary, and the opportunity to further capability through continued special training must be carefully considered and provided by law to insure that this important part of any child care program is always in the hands of those who will protect the interest of the state in the child.

In short, "constructive" court decisions, regarding children and parents, are not just a legal problem. "Poor" court decisions in that field are merely expressive of the failure of the state to have an all-inclusive total program for children requiring the state's protection.

Such failure, while indicative of the lack of proper legislative consideration, is in fact an indictment of the citizenry who, while expressing concern for children, do not exhibit an active concern through joint "citizen action." Legislatures have many problems to consider and inadequate time to become experts in all fields. Citizen action which thoroughly investigates the total need and the proper means of meeting it can be of great benefit to the legislature, the state, and the children and parents. It must be a continuing effort, and for the concerned citizen, one of the prices he pays to live in a better community.

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Licensing Reaches Out

The licensing staff of the Alabama Department of Pensions and Security recently developed a project to help improve licensed day care services. The experience, which may be of interest to other states, is reported here by one member of the licensing unit who was assigned to the project. The two workers who took part in the project had, in addition to their social work training, teacher training and experience in teaching young children.

The work of our licensing staff has always been accomplished almost exclusively through contacts with the supervisors of child care facilities. In our project for enriching programs of day care centers, however, we felt that participation of every staff member was needed.

We believe that one of our primary roles as licensing agency should be that of enabler. In this project, through meetings with the day care workers, and demonstrations with the children themselves, we hoped to illustrate basic principles and techniques and thus enable staffs to improve services. The program began in an urban area where nine centers are located. When our plans became known, some of the directors quickly invited us to their centers, and once the program was underway, no one wanted to be "left out."

Staff Meetings

In order to make the demonstrations more purposeful, a meeting with staff was held at the center on the preceding afternoon. Maids sat with the sleeping children so that staff could attend. We discussed the primary needs of all children—emotional, physical and intellectual—how they are met in day care, and the reasons for the demonstration.

At most of the staff meetings, participation was active and personnel interested. Some groups were less responsive than others, however, and some were a little resistant. Some of the workers said in a laughing tone of voice that they hoped the children "acted up" for us as they sometimes did for them. If nothing else, even the most unresponsive were looking forward to a day of watching someone else cope with problems they had to cope with daily.

After the demonstrations the following morning, we held a brief discussion period

while the children were on the playground under the supervision of other teachers in the center. These meetings varied. In each center staff had different questions and comments. Some wanted to talk about our method of controlling the group, some had specific questions about a particular child, and some wanted to know where to obtain some of the materials we had used or suggested, such as stories which are suitable for playing out. In almost all of the centers, we felt the questions indicated that the staff had benefitted from the discussions we had held before the demonstration.

The Demonstrations

We used the free activity period for demonstrating the use of a variety of creative media—easel paints, finger paints, clay, paste and scissors, crayons, beads to string, puzzles, plastic brick, blocks and other construction toys. In some centers we were asked to demonstrate a specific medium with some of the children: Finger paints were requested most frequently. We brought along dress-up clothes to enhance play corner activities for the children. During the directed activity period we demonstrated story telling, creative dramatics, music (listening and movement), finger plays and singing.

An opportunity arose in every center to demonstrate some of our principles of discipline and control. One child painted his ears blue and had to be removed from the easel, another had to be removed from the group for being unruly, and several times the entire group had to be cautioned about making too much noise.

Several times we were able to use an error on our part constructively:

On one occasion, a child kept trying to build something from some "magic wood" we had brought. Something had happened to the wood and it would not stick. The child was absorbed in it, but when we saw that it was not working we suggested that he might want to move to another activity. He refused and kept trying to make it stick. Being adult and wanting things to "work," we suggested again that he might want to choose something else to work with. The child refused, saying, "Just leave me alone."

This was participatory and of a variety, and

We put value of their delivery periods, good stories develop long children a bit too some of being on to so tions we moving f versa.

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Evaluation

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This was a good example of too much teacher participation during the free activity period, and of a child's desire to choose his own activity, and be left to it.

We put special effort into illustrating the value of stories well told. The children showed their delight and were attentive for quite long periods. Day care staffs were able to see that good story telling techniques helped to develop longer spans of interest, and taught the children to listen. When their interest lagged a bit toward the end, we sometimes skipped some of the story, thus illustrating the wisdom of being alert to straying interest and moving on to something else. During the demonstrations we also illustrated the effectiveness of moving from active to quiet activities and vice versa.

The children had been given only casual preparation for our visit. Staffs were cautioned against warning them to "be good." We recognized that children do not respond to strangers as they do to their own workers and we tried to make the staffs comfortable by letting them know that we expected that the children might show off, or be unusually quiescent. The children always commented on our arrival, often with "Here come some mothers," or "Here comes somebody's grandmother."

Evaluation

In the majority of the centers, the demonstrations were quite successful. The most difficulty occurred in small groups with a wide range of ages. In all of the centers the children had fun, were responsive and relaxed.

On the whole, we felt that most of the workers benefited from these meetings. The workers' comments lead us to believe that the demonstrations and discussions accomplished the following:

Gave status to the day care workers.

Gave day care staff more security as they saw that many of their methods were in accordance with those recommended.

Strengthened relationships between the day care staff and the licensing division.

Illustrated the need for a variety of activities for children.

Illustrated the need for a variety of materials and supplies to work with.

Stressed the importance of active and quiet periods.

Showed the workers that a rich program is possible in their own center with their own children.

Stressed the need of knowledge and skill on the part of the day care worker.

Stimulated interest in follow-up meetings.

Having completed this project in one area, we feel we can make improvements as we move to other areas. For instance, the workers preferred that the meeting held prior to the demonstration be held for larger groups at night. They indicated there was insufficient time to meet during the day. We may follow this plan in part. We will continue, however, to have the discussions at the center if it is not possible for staff to attend meetings after hours. We will continue to hold all demonstrations at the respective centers.

This project represents an expensive investment in terms of time and effort, but we believe it will yield rich dividends.

COBB DESHAZO

*Child Welfare Consultant
State Department of Pensions and Security
Montgomery, Alabama*

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NEWS FROM THE FIELD

Interprofessional Activities and Adoption

An increasing number of professional as-
sociations are issuing position statements on
the appropriate role of physicians, lawyers,
and hospital staff in the adoption of chil-
dren. In large part, such action has resulted
from efforts of individual members of these
professions who have served on boards of
state and local social agencies or as con-
sultants to them, or as representatives on
community councils concerned with adoption.

The Child Welfare League of America, in
the National Conference on Adoption¹ in
January 1955, brought outstanding scientists,
physicians, lawyers and clergymen together
with executives, board and staff members of
adoption agencies to examine adoption prac-
tices in the light of their professional knowl-
edge and experience. The U. S. Children's
Bureau, with League participation, has since
June 1955 been sponsoring a series of meet-
ings of representatives of national medical
and legal associations and other professional
groups, to discuss their respective roles in
promoting adoption practices to protect the
child, the unmarried mother, and the adop-
tive parents.²

Child welfare agencies that are looking for
opportunities to work with other professional
groups, or are prepared to take the initiative
in seeking their cooperation, will be inter-
ested in the action taken by various state
and local medical societies and bar associa-
tions.

The Committee on Adoptions of the
American Academy of Pediatrics, under the
leadership of Dr. Samuel Karelitz of New
York City (long associated with Louise Wise
Services), has been a pioneer in pointing up
responsibility of the medical profession
for better adoption practices, particularly
through the publication in 1959 of a manual
on *Adoption of Children*.³

¹ See *A Study of Adoption Practice*, Vol. II, Selected Sci-
entific Papers Presented at the National Conference on Adoption,
January 1955. Child Welfare League of America, 1956.

² See Children's Bureau folders No. 44, 45, 47, on the physi-
cian's, the social worker's and the attorney's part in adoption,
1958, 1959.

³ Available from American Academy of Pediatrics, 1801 Hin-
man Avenue, Evanston, Illinois, \$1.00.

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Dr. Arthur G. King, of Cincinnati, as chairman of the Committee on Infant Adoptions of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, is actively encouraging the interest of local obstetrical and gynecological societies in improving adoption practices in their communities, and in bettering relationships between doctors and social workers. The College has endorsed and distributed to its fellows the pamphlet issued by the Children's Bureau on *The Physician's Part in Adoption*. It has sponsored a pilot study in five key cities: Baltimore, Cincinnati, Denver, Detroit and Los Angeles. In each city a social worker, a pediatrician and an obstetrician are working together in "a campaign of better education and better cooperation." Recommendations to other communities will be based on the experience of these five cities.

The representatives of the Committee on Maternal and Child Welfare of the American Medical Association, and of the American Academy of General Practice, at a meeting called by the U.S. Children's Bureau in May, agreed to propose that the manual of the American Academy of Pediatrics be distributed to their membership, and that a Committee on Adoption be set up in these organizations.

The American Bar Association has an Adoption Committee as part of its Family Law Section.⁴ The Family Law Section hopes to stimulate interest of state bar associations in holding meetings and institutes on adoption law. In Cleveland, the Bar Association has worked closely with the Welfare Federation. Some years ago, it issued a statement of "Principles Regarding Adoption Practices" and has concerned itself with implementing the statement. The Bar Association in Baltimore has distributed a leaflet on *Adoption in Maryland*.

As an outcome of its participation in the League Committee on Standards for Services to Unmarried Parents, the American Hospital Association is currently preparing a policy statement for hospitals on serving unmarried

mothers. At the present time, hospital associations in New Mexico and Maryland, and most recently in New York City, have passed resolutions disapproving participation of hospital personnel and medical staff in adoptive placements.

The most recent action of a state medical society to come to our attention was that of the House of Delegates of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland. In April 1960, this body passed the following resolution regarding *Proper Procedures of Adoption* (in part as a result of the efforts of two physicians who represent the Faculty on the Advisory Committee on Adoption of the State Department of Public Welfare):

"WHEREAS, the physician is in a particularly privileged situation with regard to knowledge about the availability of children for adoption and the desire of couples to adopt a child; and

"WHEREAS, ethical and lawful conduct on the part of physicians is of importance and concern not only to the public, but to physicians generally and to the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland; and

"WHEREAS, Articles 88A and 16 of the Annotated Code of Maryland make specific provisions for licensed child placement agencies, local departments of welfare or the child's natural parent or parents, grandparents, or the child's natural parent's adult brothers or sisters to initiate adoption in accordance with procedures outlined in the laws; and

"WHEREAS, physicians generally and the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland are in full accord with the purposes of the State law to first safeguard the best interests of children who may be available for adoption and then the interests as well of the natural parents and of the adoptive parents; and

"WHEREAS, it is generally recognized that adoption is a highly specialized process which involves the exercise of social work skills in securing competent evaluations of the physical and mental needs in so far as can be determined and capacities of the child and of the physical, mental and the social attributes of the adoptive parents and in placing the child in the best possible home for the child; therefore be it

"RESOLVED, that the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland recommends: (1) that all participating medical societies in the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland carefully scruti-

⁴Mrs. Orpha Merrill, of Norman, Oklahoma, chairman of the Adoption Committee, had worked closely with her husband, Prof. Maurice H. Merrill, in the drafting of the *Uniform Adoption Act* by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (*Iowa Law Review*, Winter, 1955).

nize any practice contrary to the best interests of the child which may lead to the placement or referral by a physician of any child for adoption;

(2) that individual physicians acquaint the patients to whom they provide professional services with the proper procedures of adoption as prescribed by law and encourage their patients promptly to contact the authorized social agencies in all adoptions; and be it further

"RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be mailed to the Presidents of all participating Medical Societies; to the Directors of the State and City Departments of Welfare; to all licensed agencies, private or public; to the Attorney General and his assistants of the State of Maryland; to the State, County and City Health Department Officers; and be distributed to every member of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland through publication in the Maryland State Medical Journal."

READERS' FORUM

The Various Components of Day Care To the Editor:

It was a pleasure to read Alfreda F. Yeomans' article "Day Care—One of the Community's Services to Children," in the October issue of *CHILD WELFARE*. Mrs. Yeomans squarely places day care programs into a community's social welfare effort. Her illustrative account clearly establishes that day care programs both as a supportive service and as a resource for social casework can be of real help to the parent(s) in need of such social service.

Undoubtedly, day care service programs provide parents with an opportunity to absent themselves from their home and to attend to the problems which require their attention away from home. At the same time, however, I wish that an article such as Mrs. Yeomans' as well as our activities in the field would establish unmistakably that the core of day care services is *the care program offered to the children*.

Day care services exist to provide children with the supportive care *and* opportunities to overcome their temporary but significant dis-

location and separation from parent(s). In addition to providing the child with regular and dependable adult care, day care services also exist to stimulate and to enrich these children's development in all areas of growth. All these efforts require highly skilled and personally qualified staff: persons who are professionally prepared and personally equipped to work with this age range of children with these particular situational demands. These efforts require staff, space and ample equipment in order to provide the child with an intimate experience with *one* caring adult amidst a *small* group of other children and plenty of opportunity to partake of a rich diet of play and other social experience. In other words, the most essential ingredients of day care are the care and learning opportunities offered to the children.

I felt compelled to add these observations to Mrs. Yeomans' article, because otherwise we might feel tempted to strengthen merely our professional services in the administrative and in the casework components of the day care effort, while the care of the children is taken for granted. Actually, I submit, it is the *care-work* with children which demands much of our attention—that is, the planning and the carrying out of an appropriate care and teaching program as well as the training and the employment of personnel to achieve the quality of service our children in day care require.

HENRY W. MAIER

Associate Professor
University of Washington
Seattle, Wash.

(Editor's Note: We are pleased to have Mr. Maier remind our readers of the importance of the various components in day care as a child welfare service. However, we asked Mrs. Yeomans specifically to focus her article on the casework aspects since the need for professional casework services is so often neglected.)

Salaries in Social Work

To the Editor:

I was delighted to read the editorial comments in your September issue on "Salaries in Social Work". Fortunately, professionals

in this field have steadily been getting higher salaries during the last ten years.

There is a large group, however, working with the emotionally disturbed children in our institutions, who have not been so fortunate salarywise. This group consists of housemothers, housefathers and cottage couples. This valiant group works day in and day out with from ten to twenty difficult children. They live usually in the same building as the children, so they have little respite or relaxation. It is true that their salaries have increased recently, but the increase has been very slight in comparison with that of the professional worker.

Houseparents have the closest contact with the children. Many of them now receive less than domestic servants do. They work long hours and there are not too many opportunities for advancement for them. Institutions should not be afraid to pay houseparents adequately if they want them to remain long enough to be of real value to the child in an institution.

GERTRUDE R. STEIN
Vocational Service Agency
New York City

BOOK NOTES

Issues in American Social Work, edited by Alfred J. Kahn. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959. 354 pp., \$5.00.

This is the kind of anthology one likes to quote from. It is well conceived, well written, and well edited, with penetrating conceptualization; new, interesting ideas; clear, broad views accurately founded; and impeccable use of references, together with research findings used as building blocks in developing a point of view or a hypothesis—and all this located in the social sciences as if this were the most natural place in the world for it.

Who are the twelve social workers in this collection with a solid enough grasp of the social sciences to be able to do this? Eleven of them are teachers of social work: Harriett

M. Bartlett, Nathan E. Cohen, Joseph W. Eaton, Alfred Kadushin, Alfred J. Kahn, Samuel Mencher, Henry J. Meyer, Norman A. Polansky, William Schwartz, Isabel L. Stamm, and Robert D. Vinter. The twelfth is Bertram M. Beck. I give their names because the authorship of work like this which sets a bench mark, and possibly a trend, should not go unrecognized. It is also worth noting, perhaps, that ten of the twelve contributors are men and that most of them are Ph.D.'s. They come together here to define and examine issues and problems of function, knowledge, social welfare policy, social structure, community organization, group work, voluntarism and professional identity and professionalization. They speculate, they draw conclusions, they point out trends, they propose.

The papers by Kahn, Polansky, and Beck had special interest to this reviewer. Kahn's view of function is worth presenting. He cautions against our zealous search for a unifying conceptual key to all social work method, which he likens to the alchemist's search for the philosopher's stone, "valuable, the source of many innovations and discoveries, however unreal." He goes on to say:

"Social work is a complex institution. . . . Much of its essence is lost if we seek to conceptualize its function, its future, its contribution to social welfare solely in terms compatible with, in fact derive from, a temporarily popular (or even temporarily valid) unifying notion about social work methods. . . .

"Since the conceptual keys proposed tend, at least at present, to be based in individual or group adjustive or therapeutic services, this kind of approach inevitably overemphasizes what Wilensky and Lebeaux call the 'residual' rather than the 'institutional' conception of social welfare and ignores the substantial historical evidence that the nature and specific function of social work (and thus the methods of social workers) must, in fact, reflect the given, changing social situation."

The residual conception is exemplified by Helen Witmer's 1942 view of social welfare as something that is needed if institutions or individuals do not function adequately or if problems arise in their relationships. This view is called residual because it implies, in the words of Wilensky and Lebeaux, that "social welfare institutions should come into play

only when the normal structures of supply, the family and the market, break down." ¹ Adds Kahn:

"Given such a conception, methods directed to relieve stress, solve individual problems, help people use services, or promote adjustment, seem to be the unique, characteristic, appropriate and sole social work claim to professional competence. . . .

"The profession will not meet the demands of the future unless it sees the residual function as one already far too narrow. . . .

"For as long as society grows and changes, individual need will change. Changing need must be articulated, interpreted, and established as legitimate. Where primary social institutions or the institutions of the market place are unable to respond, social welfare services must be established, given form and content, and manned. These do not become residual services, supplementary services, or 'last resort' services however, but part of the normal arrangements in a modern society. In all of this, social workers may serve in therapeutic roles, through direct service, in group leadership positions, or as administrators, policy personnel, researchers, social actionists and planners."

They will be valuable because it has been their unique professional experience to have had their perspective and value-system shaped by their concern for "person-in-situation, group-in-community, and community-in-society."

"The social worker in local government, foreign service, city planning, recreation, urban renewal, education, community development . . . begins with whatever is applicable from the core of knowledge and skill available to casework, group work, and community organization. Eventually new developments in social work method and process, relevant to these new centers of activity, will take place and become part of the general sum of social work knowledge and skill."

With this far-ranging, high-spirited view Bertram M. Beck is in accord. He writes, ". . . social work's unique role in social change might be not simply to advance measures of social reform which embody humanistic values (there are many who will do this) but through the application of social work meth-

ods to check forces of barbarism in individual, group, and community." This new professional social actionist is already with us. He is our colleague in community organization.

Mr. Beck goes on to say:

". . . social work must be a social force and not merely the mirror in which the world in which it operates is reflected, otherwise it will tend to reflect in its own apparatus the sickness of society."

"The response which social work advocates to the challenges of our times must be derived from the experience of social work in working with individuals, groups, and communities. The methods and techniques of advocacy need to be based on theoretical formulations drawn from basic sciences concerning the nature of social change. These methods and techniques should bear implicit relation to other social work methods. It should be possible to embrace the method of advocacy within the working definition of social work practice. Social leadership must be taught in schools of social work as, of course, it is not today taught."

He proposes a third year of training for social leaders which would draw on theories of social change.

The article by Norman Polansky is a treat which I shall not spoil by paraphrasing. I shall merely say that from Erik H. Erickson's concept of ego-identity, Polansky develops a theory of professional identity in social work which is refreshingly imaginative, penetrating, ingenious, and witty.

CALLMAN RAWLEY

Executive Director
Jewish Family & Children's Service
of Minneapolis
Minneapolis, Minn.

Report of the Advisory Council on Public Assistance Containing Findings and Recommendations, January 1960. Published in pamphlet form as Senate Document 93, by the U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

What are the implications of the Report of the Advisory Council on Public Assistance for the future of children in their own homes who require assistance? The report's emphasis on making general assistance more adequate

¹Harold L. Wilensky and Charles N. Lebeaux, *Industrial Society and Social Welfare*, Russell Sage Foundation, N.Y., 1958.

makes real one of the advisory council's basic assumptions:

"No man, woman, or child should go hungry, be cold or ill, lack shelter or otherwise be in need without the opportunity to get effective help."

The council's concern about general assistance led to a number of recommendations whose acceptance would make possible:

Federal aid regardless of cause of need (Recommendation 1).

Choice by the state whether to administer assistance as a single program (Recommendation 2).

Broadening of ADC "to include any financially needy children living with any relative or relatives" (Recommendation 3).

Elimination of residence requirements (Recommendation 4).

Higher levels of assistance so that assistance payments are "adequate for health and well-being" (Recommendations 5 and 6).

State efforts "to modify the financial burden on localities for public assistance" (Recommendation 11).

All of these measures would be aimed at greater adequacy of payments to individuals and families in both extent of coverage and amounts. This in itself would be of significance to children and their families by improving the level of living, and thus the basic conditions of physical existence upon which a family can build in its efforts to operate as a functioning unit of society rather than as a spawning ground for ill health, maladjustment and dependency.

Now, how do we keep body and spirit together? Our concern for children and families requires attention to the "whole man." The advisory council paid particular attention to this by focusing on the need to improve the tools used to "promote social rehabilitation and help prevent dependency." The primary tool in social services is the worker. The council recommends more staff with higher qualifications, obtained through increased Federal funds for training workers and through higher salaries. A supplementary statement by a council member reminds us of the importance of conserving professional time for profes-

sional social work, and relieving caseworkers of other types of work now being done by them (a problem not peculiar to our financial assistance programs).

The council also emphasizes the need for research and demonstration projects in strengthening family life. Our goal is certainly to improve the knowledge base which each worker has available to him as he attempts to assist families in their efforts to lead individually and socially satisfying lives.

This report calls for closer study by each of us, both those directly involved in the administration of public assistance and those interested in such assistance programs because they are significant for children and families and important in social welfare and in the general welfare of society. The effectiveness of the report will be determined not only by its acceptance by Congress and its incorporation into law, but also by its acceptance by public assistance agencies and others involved, with resulting incorporation into program.

Public assistance may be viewed as a method by which a society has attempted to meet needs exposed by changes and continuing inadequacies in major social institutions, such as the family. Public assistance restrictions may also be seen as an expression of community opinion limiting the circumstances under which persons should be helped. The committee discussion and supplementary statements filed with the report raise the following question: "Is the United States a national community or a large group of local communities?"¹

To return to our original point, the emphasis on making general assistance more adequate is evidence of the increased recognition of the importance of adequate provisions on a broader base for people in need, rather than only for those falling within arbitrary eligibility limits. This is also the challenge for child welfare. While improving techniques of foster care and adoptive placement are vital, my reading of the recent Child Welfare League of America study of foster care² in-

¹ Note especially the following pages in the report: 1, 9-10, 14-15, 38, 41-42.

² Henry S. Maas and Richard E. Engler, Jr., *Children in Need of Parents*, Columbia University Press, N.Y., 1959.

icates that such improvement is not the most significant focus for child welfare programs. Technical perfection is no substitute for perspective. The great need is for the vision to survey all the programs which have an impact on and importance for children and their families, and to work for their improvement in the interest of each and every child.

W. J. MAXEY

*Director
Department of Social Welfare
Lansing, Michigan*

The League's New Address

On or about February 1, the League will be moving into larger quarters at 44 East 23 Street, New York 10, New York. Three other voluntary social welfare federations—the Family Service Association of America, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency and the National Travelers Aid Association—will also have offices at this address.

Casework Papers 1960

"Casework Papers 1960" is a compilation of selected papers delivered at the 87th Annual Forum of the National Conference on Social Welfare which was held in Atlantic City, June 5-10, 1960. These papers deal with subjects which reflect the growing concern and awareness of the social problems that demand immediate and coordinated action. Contributions by disciplines such as research, medicine, education along with social work suggest a need to examine more closely traditional methods of working with an increased number of individuals and families who are receiving more public criticism because of their anti-social behavior. With recognition of the fact that thought must be given to dealing with broad social problems, the papers appropriately underscore the theme of the Conference: "The 60's—Social Welfare Responds to a New Era."

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tion Institute, 1026 S. Spaulding Ave., Los Angeles 19, Calif.

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